

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 8, 2013

Senate Joint Resolution

No. 8

Introduced by Senator Correa

(Coauthors: Senators Beall, *Berryhill*, Calderon, Cannella, De León, Emmerson, Fuller, Gaines, Hernandez, *Huff*, Lara, Lieu, Padilla, Wolk, and Yee)

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Bonilla, Garcia, Perea, and V. Manuel Pérez)

March 18, 2013

Senate Joint Resolution No. 8—Relative to immigration.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 8, as amended, Correa. Immigration.

This measure would specify principles for repairing the nation's *historically* broken immigration system, and would urge Congress and the President of the United States to take a comprehensive and workable approach to improving the nation's immigration system using those principles.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, This country was built by immigrants seeking a
2 better life; and

3 WHEREAS, Estimates suggest there are 11 million
4 undocumented immigrants living in the shadows in the United
5 States, including millions of children brought to this country
6 undocumented who have grown up here and call the United States
7 home, *suffering from the dysfunctional immigration policy*; and

8 WHEREAS, A logical and streamlined path to citizenship for
9 ~~these residents~~ *individuals after they gain legal status* would

1 stimulate the economy by allowing them to get college degrees
2 and driver's licenses, buy homes, start new companies, and create
3 legal, tax-paying jobs, affording them a chance at the American
4 Dream; and

5 WHEREAS, The United States Congress last enacted major
6 immigration legislation more than 25 years ago; and

7 WHEREAS, Since that time, fragmented attempts at immigration
8 reform have failed to create rational and effective systems needed
9 to maintain international competitiveness. Whether in an industry
10 like agriculture, which requires large numbers of workers able to
11 perform physically demanding tasks, or in technology or health
12 care, where the demand for employees with advanced degrees is
13 projected to exceed supply within the next five years, immigration
14 policy must be designed to respond to emerging labor needs in all
15 sectors of the United States economy; and

16 WHEREAS, Our national interests and security are not served
17 by our outdated, inefficient, and slow-moving immigration system.
18 Patchwork attempts to mend its deficiencies undermine our
19 potential for prosperity and leave us vulnerable and unable to meet
20 the needs of the modern world; and

21 WHEREAS, To help our country recover from the financial
22 crisis, labor mobility is crucial to our economic prosperity. Yet
23 our rigid, outdated immigration policies are making it difficult for
24 our companies and our nation to compete. Information released in
25 a study by the University of California, Los Angeles, stated that
26 legalizing the status of undocumented immigrants working and
27 living in the United States would create around \$1.5 trillion in
28 additional gross domestic product growth over the next 10 years
29 and increase wages for all workers. A study done by the University
30 of California, Davis, indicates that the last large wave of
31 immigrants, from 1990 to 2007, raised the income of the
32 native-born American worker by an average of \$5,000; and

33 WHEREAS, California has the largest share of immigrants in
34 the country, ~~and together they make up almost half our population.~~
35 ~~Approximately 11 percent of workers in California are~~
36 ~~undocumented immigrants.~~ They are a vital and productive part
37 of our state's economy and are active in a variety of industries,
38 including technology, biotech, hospitality, agriculture, construction,
39 services, transportation, and textiles. They also represent a large

1 share of our new small business owners and create economic
2 prosperity and needed jobs for everyone; and

3 WHEREAS, Keeping these families, business owners, and hard
4 workers in the shadows of society serves no one; and

5 WHEREAS, Our state, for economic, social, health, security,
6 and prosperity reasons, must support policies that allow
7 ~~undocumented immigrants~~ *individuals* to become legal and
8 enfranchised participants in our society and economy; and

9 WHEREAS, Comprehensive immigration reform should include
10 a reasonable and timely path to citizenship for undocumented
11 immigrants living and working in the United States already. It
12 should include ~~health~~ and comprehensive background checks, and
13 require demonstrated proficiency in English and payment of all
14 current and back taxes, and should have the flexibility to respond
15 to emerging business trends; and

16 WHEREAS, The Migration Policy Institute, a nonpartisan
17 research group in Washington, D.C., estimated that in 2012 the
18 federal government spent \$18 billion on immigration enforcement
19 and that the number of United States Border Patrol agents has
20 doubled since 2004; and

21 WHEREAS, Increased enforcement has given the federal
22 government the ability to prioritize the deportation of lawbreakers
23 and dangerous individuals and to ensure our border's security.
24 Nevertheless, this enforcement should not be done in an inhumane
25 way; and

26 WHEREAS, Immigration enforcement should continue to focus
27 on criminals, not on hardworking immigrant families, and not at
28 the expense of efficient trade with two of our top three economic
29 partners; and

30 WHEREAS, The United States loses large numbers of necessary,
31 highly skilled workers due to the lengthy and complicated
32 processes currently in place to get or keep a legal residency option;
33 and

34 WHEREAS, Reform should also include an expedited process
35 for those residing abroad and applying for legal visas. Additionally,
36 reform should offer permanent residency opportunities to
37 international students in American universities who are highly
38 trained and in high demand, and in so doing avoid an intellectual
39 vacuum after their graduation; and

1 WHEREAS, This reform should ~~also include a way to help~~
2 ~~families remain together throughout the lengthy bureaucratic~~
3 ~~process~~ *recognize the societal and cultural benefits of keeping the*
4 *family unit intact*. The system should take into account special
5 circumstances surrounding candidates for probationary legal status,
6 such as those of minors brought to the country as children or
7 workers whose labor is essential to maintain our country's
8 competitiveness; now, therefore, be it
9 *Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of*
10 *California, jointly*, That the Legislature urges the President and
11 the Congress of the United States to take a comprehensive and
12 workable approach to solving our nation's *historically* broken
13 immigration system, using the principles described in this
14 resolution; and be it further
15 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
16 this resolution to the President and the Vice President of the United
17 States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the
18 Majority Leader of the Senate, and to each Senator and
19 Representative from California in the Congress of the United
20 States.

O